

So why would the United States want to endorse this behavior and reward the companies, working with the government, that have unleashed this violent assault on workers' rights?

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That, after all, is what a trade agreement is really about, a partnership. This is not a partnership the United States of America should enter into.

I'm voting "no" on the Colombia free trade agreement. I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the Colombia free trade agreement.

I believe the facts are simple. Voting for the Colombia free trade agreement is a vote for violent union busting, for driving people from their land, for setting the American working man and woman up to compete on an unlevel playing field that will cost us jobs and livelihoods. I know that it is difficult to look at these pictures and hard to accept the reality of the danger to people who speak up in Colombia.

But we cannot ignore the facts, and in Colombia, trade union activists are targeted for assassination and murder. That's not an easy fact to accept, but it's a fact. Approving the free trade pact with Colombia says that the United States can live with this fact. It brings the blood of union activist victims from Bogota to Washington. That blood won't be easily washed away.

Let's think about the movements for freedom happening from Cairo to Damascus to Tripoli. We applaud them. We congratulate the protesters.

When the union leaders in Wisconsin, Ohio, and Puerto Rico stand up for their rights against oppressive State governments, my Democratic colleagues, they applaud those workers. When angry Tea Partiers bash our government and talk about individual rights, my Republican colleagues applaud them.

Well, today we have a chance to do more than applaud. We can side with the people who are standing up for freedom in Colombia. I suggest that everyone in the House who has ever celebrated, applauded, or supported a popular, pro-democracy movement in the U.S. or abroad think long and hard before they vote "yes" on the Colombia free trade agreement.

Because what we see is what we get when it comes to free trade in Colombia. We get a partnership with a country where speaking your mind is a death sentence. I want free trade, but I'm for an agreement that builds commerce while protecting commerce, environment, and the rights of farmers and men.

This is not that agreement. This is an agreement that turns a blind eye to violence and oppression and injustice.

So I ask my colleagues to do what Alejandro and Anna who were murdered cannot do: say "no" to FTA with Colombia.

GRIDLOCK EXISTS IN UNITED STATES CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, I stand once again to make a plea to our spiritual leaders throughout the United States to be heard and to speak out against the gridlock that exists here in the United States Congress.

I do this feeling very comfortable since we open up our session with a prayer and as everyone can see and many have taken for granted, it says: "In God We Trust."

Clearly, the protesters have caused quite a bit of inconvenience for my colleagues and the constituents in New York, but the fact remains that they speak out for a frustration that most all Americans have. Uncertain as to what the future holds for them, many have lost their jobs, their savings, pulled their kids out of school; and they are frustrated that we in the Congress hardly talk to each other because of the depth of polarization.

And yet beyond the politics of it all, whether it's Democrats or Republicans, when you think about it, this recession can only be stopped and unemployment lowered by a combination of two things, the reduction of our spending and the raising of revenue in order to increase not only the confidence that people have but the necessity of having economic growth so America can regain its status among civilized nations.

Yet we find very little movement here because there's some that have already embarked on the 2012 campaign. They do that even though millions of Americans are suffering painfully, seeking relief now and not waiting until the end of next year.

It seems to me, whether we are dealing with the Koran or whether we are dealing with the Bible or the Torah, one thing is abundantly clear, that those who believe in a superior force would know that one of the things that we have a moral obligation to do is to take care of the vulnerable among us.

This great Nation now has broken all records in terms of our middle class actually being shrunk as people are forced into poverty. One out of every five kids in the United States of America is born into poverty, and we find that a smaller number of people in our country are controlling nearly half of the wealth.

There's something wrong with that equation, and certainly this is the time to fill that vacuum. For those who believe there's no direction to the protesters, there may not be direction, but they certainly expect that their government should be there for them. Their government is gridlocked. Our spiritual leaders could encourage them not just to pray, but to become active, find out who the Members are that represent them in the Congress, ask them to be voting on these bills that can create economic growth or can create jobs.

And so whether you're Protestant or Catholic or Jews or gentiles or Mormons or Muslims, this is the time that America needs you. This is why our Forefathers have never written out religion. While it cannot dictate which religion, if any, you should have, certainly we do have freedom of religion.

And as the protesters have a constitutional right in order to speak out to release their frustrations, I think we have a spiritual responsibility to take those parts of the proclamations that they're making, the protestations that they're making, and those parts that take care of trying to get the vulnerable to get a fair shake out of this economic disaster we find ourselves in, let us take care of our aged, our sick, those that are in poverty.

Let Social Security and Medicaid and Medicare be something that's not a gamble, but something that the American people can depend on.

Let the churches and the synagogues and the mosques and the temples be open so people can express themselves, and let this Congress attempt to be more civil in recognizing that we have a responsibility that goes beyond the election. We have a responsibility to the American people. So I conclude my remarks and make my plea.

HONORING GENERAL DUNCAN J. McNABB

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. COSTELLO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor and privilege to pay tribute to a leader and a warrior, General Duncan J. McNabb, commander of the United States Transportation Command. General McNabb is retiring after honorably serving this great Nation for over 37 years with a distinguished career.

General McNabb graduated from the United States Air Force Academy in 1974. As a command pilot, he has more than 5,600 flying hours in transport and rotary wing aircraft. In addition, General McNabb has held command and staff positions at squadron, group, wing, major command and Department of Defense levels and is considered the finest mobility and logistics expert in the Department of Defense.

I have had the pleasure of working with General McNabb from 2005 to 2007 when he assumed command of the Air Mobility Command at Scott Air Force Base in the congressional district that I am privileged to represent and, again, when he returned to Scott Air Force Base to be the commander of USTRANSCOM in 2008.

USTRANSCOM is a critical part of our military operations. It provides the coordinated transportation, distribution and sustainment, which projects and maintains our national power. As a global combatant commander, General McNabb has made supporting the American warfighter his top priority.

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Under General McNabb's leadership, USTRANSCOM has moved over 1.5 million passengers and over 4 million short tons of cargo in supporting Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraq Freedom. To put this in perspective, this is the equivalent to moving the entire population of southwestern and southern Illinois and all of their household belongings halfway around the world. America truly has a military deployment and distribution system that is unmatched anywhere in the world.

Under General McNabb's command, USTRANSCOM has provided humanitarian relief to hurricane victims in the United States, earthquake victims in Haiti and Japan, and flood victims in Pakistan, just to name a few. The medicine, supplies, equipment, and personnel that USTRANSCOM has delivered in the wake of these and other natural disasters ultimately saved lives and eased human suffering.

In addition to conducting some of the largest military moves since World War II and providing unparalleled humanitarian relief, General McNabb has made it a priority to transform our Nation's deployment and distribution system, ensuring our ability to project national power where needed with the greatest speed and agility, the highest efficiency, and the most reliable level of trust and accuracy. As a USTRANSCOM commander, General McNabb actively took on the role of the distribution process owner for DOD, charged with improving efficiency and interoperability across the entire DOD supply chain. To meet the needs of the military and the Nation, General McNabb developed the Arctic overflight route and expanded multimodal logistics throughout the northern distribution network. He has improved combat readiness and capability while saving hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars. Troops and equipment are now arriving and leaving the battlefield faster and at less cost.

General McNabb will be the first to tell you he did not accomplish these feats alone. He led the way in seeking collaborative joint solutions to today's complex global distribution issues. Those who worked for him and with him, military and civilians from every branch of service, will miss his leadership and mentorship. They'll miss the stories and humor he used to get his message across. We in Congress will miss his straightforward approach and sound counsel. The Nation will miss his devotion to duty, ceaseless drive for improvement, and unwavering support to the men and women serving in our armed services.

Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize General McNabb for serving the Air Force with honor and distinction for 37 years. I also wish to recognize his wife, Linda, and wish her the very best in the future as well. The Air Force will lose not one but two exceptional people upon General McNabb's retirement.

General McNabb and Linda, we wish you well in your future endeavors and pray that those who follow in your footsteps may continue the legacy of unprecedented support for our great Nation.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 14 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Loving God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We pray this day, O Lord, for peace in our world, that righteousness will be done and freedom will flourish.

The work of these days has concerned the interchange of goods, talent, and resources with other nations of the world. In Your wisdom You created many peoples and have asked us to live and work together so that all might know and experience Your blessings.

Send Your Spirit upon the Members of this people's House, that they might judiciously balance seemingly irreconcilable interests. Help them to execute their consciences and judgments with clarity and purity of heart so that all might stand before You honestly and trust that You can bring forth righteous fruits from their labors.

Bless us this day and every day, and may all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. FORBES) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. FORBES led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

MILAN PUSKAR

(Mr. MCKINLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, this past week, West Virginia experienced a tremendous loss. Milan "Mike" Puskar, cofounder, former chairman and CEO of Mylan Labs in Morgantown and the namesake of WVU's Milan Puskar Stadium, passed away.

Mike was not only a visionary entrepreneur who grew Mylan into the largest generic drug manufacturer in America, but he also was a beloved philanthropist who was passionate about our Mountain State. He was an extremely committed supporter of West Virginia University and gave selflessly of his time and treasure to the academic and athletic programs there.

Milan had a kind heart and lived his life with the utmost integrity. The life he lived and the legacy he left behind have left West Virginia a better place for our children and grandchildren.

My wife, Mary, and I, as well as all West Virginians and Mountaineer fans across this country, will keep Mike and his family in our thoughts and prayers. He will be missed by all.

RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE IN EGYPT

(Mr. SIRES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to condemn the violence in Egypt. Months after Muslims and Christians fought for democracy, religious violence continues to plague the country. Worse yet, in post-revolution Egypt, violence against Coptic Christians is rising.

This weekend, over two dozen people were killed in Cairo, most of them Coptic Christians. Demonstrators had gathered to protest the attack on a Coptic church and other Christian-owned properties. In response, military officials aggressively confronted protesters by driving vehicles into crowds and shooting off rounds of live ammunition. In the end, 26 people were dead and hundreds were wounded.

This brutal crackdown puts into great question the ability of the military government to bring democracy to Egypt and protect its minority Coptic population. These military attacks are unacceptable, and the resulting deaths are absolutely appalling.

The Coptic Christians simply want respect for their churches, their homes, and their basic rights. Democracy cannot thrive in Egypt if the rights of Coptic Christians are not respected.

The United States must do everything it can to pressure military leaders to end the violence, punish those